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Economic and Social Implications of Status-Driven Brand Consumption among Female Students: A Step Toward Sustainable Consumer Education

Ruqaya Imtiaz,* Irum Shahid and Rana Muhammad Amir

Department of Sociology, Government College Women University Faisalabad, Pakistan; Institute of Agricultural Extension, Education and Rural Development, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, Pakistan
*Corresponding author's e-mail: ruqayaimtiaz@gcwuf.edu.pk

This study analyzes the symbolic significance of brand consumption among female students in public universities of Faisalabad and explores its broader implications for sustainable and economic development. The research investigates how the symbolic features of branded goods—particularly their role as status symbols—influence consumption behavior, often leading to overconsumption beyond actual needs. Quantitative analysis based on a sample of 200 female students revealed significant associations between brand status, brand fame, advertising portrayals, and consumption behavior. Findings highlight that while brand consumption enhances perceived social prestige, it may also encourage unsustainable economic practices such as overspending and reduced savings. These trends, if widespread, can affect not only personal financial well-being but also long-term community development. The study underscores the need for youth-oriented consumer education and awareness programs promoting sustainable consumption and economic responsibility.

Keywords: Brand consumption, status symbol, symbolic significance, sustainable consumption, economic implications, consumer education, youth behavior.

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, rapid industrialization and globalization have amplified consumer culture and material aspirations. While branded goods satisfy symbolic and psychological needs, such patterns of consumption also raise concerns regarding economic sustainability. Excessive focus on brands as markers of status can lead to financially unsustainable lifestyles, especially among youth with limited income sources. From a development perspective, status-driven consumption influences not only individuals' spending patterns but also their capacity to save, invest, and contribute productively to society. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12—Responsible Consumption and Production—emphasizes the importance of cultivating consumption behaviors that support both individual financial stability and broader community well-being. Therefore, understanding how symbolic brand consumption operates within youth populations offers critical insights for designing educational and policy interventions that foster economically and socially sustainable societies. The fast process of manufacturing has overloaded the market with products demanded by masses. Producers came to realize that their products have similar functional features and do not have something distinctive and unique to make them different. They started to use emotional components of products. These emotional components are called as brands. In the today's world, brands have become very necessary for a product's survival, fame, symbolic value and image. Any brand is not simply a label or trademark rather it is a composition of views, signs, imageries and allegories that symbolize a company, product or service. Hence, brand is defined as a system of signs and symbols that make the consumer get engaged in an imaginary or symbolic process. Such processes add tangible value to the products and services being offered by companies. These products become worldwide communicator of information about the financial status of the owner, his taste, social prestige and behavior (Shakaryan, 2010).

It has been seen in the literature that many products, predominantly clothes, shoes, cell phones, bags and sunglasses serve as a way to communicate one's social status or class. Individuals, who are more inclined to display their image to others, tend to use such status products more extensively. The results of the present research indicate that

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people from primary group like parents, relatives and close friends have great influence in this regard. Reference group and gender are significant factors that trigger consumption of status goods. People tend to consume the certain goods to identify with or show belongingness with particular group. In addition, while talking of gender young males tend to put more value to the overt consumption of the status goods. Status consumption (tendency to value the status and consume the goods which provide status) leads to conspicuous consumption (tendency to communicate status to others or enhance image in the eyes of others through overtly consuming the status goods). Functional benefits are not the only reason which triggers status consumption rather it is the conspicuousness of the branded status goods. Consumers do not wear sunglasses always to avoid sunlight or shield their eyes but rather to communicate a certain image to others. This is also true of fashion apparel, cell phones, watches and other product categories. Highly prestigious and luxury brands are more likely to influence the desire to use their products in conspicuous manner. To be used successfully in conspicuous manner, products must catch the eyes of others and signal affluence (O'Cass & McEwen, 2004).

The social role and status are the most significant factors influencing the buying behavior. Remarkably, the status is signaled by purchasing luxury goods. Reference groups such as friends and family put a great influence on consumer behavior. It can be seen that norms, values, standards and personality traits are formed from these institutions. Brands have got this dimension of consumer behavior and started working on symbolic benefits their products can produce. Moreover, brands either directly or indirectly have succeeded to communicate these socially significant features of branded products to consumers in many ways like through advertisements on television and campaigns on social media (Perreau, 2013).

Consumer buying behavior has two dimensions, socially oriented behavior and personally oriented behavior. Socially oriented behavior is characterized by the need to impress others whereas personally oriented behavior signifies need to gratify one's own internal desires and urges. In socially oriented behavior, consumers think to inspire others, to catch other's eyes and to have appealing look and to signal their social prestige. While in personally oriented behavior, a person strives for self-fulfillment. Consumers tend to satisfy their own needs. The social component of the buyer's characteristics is very obvious. Consumers have a desire to belong to a particular social group and be recognized. Luxury goods make consumers display a lot about them. Their needs are pleasure-seeking, hedonistic and illogical. Here self-recognition, signaling belongingness with particular group and pleasing oneself play a crucial role (Scholz, 2014).

Some goods are used for utility maximization and some goods are used primarily to signal wealth. It depends on the consumers that what they actually want from branded products: functional benefits or symbolic benefits. It is almost impossible to categorize all goods for all consumers. Some consumers tend to buy particular goods getting influenced by their peers and relatives. When a consumer comes to evaluate a product and its utility, he will consider the number of things like price, quality, functional benefits of the products, what the product denotes, and many other factors. The pursuit of status consumption is a leading cause of financial management problems. In addition, individuals chose to live far beyond their means. They tend to take loans in order to facilitate their overconsumption in term of status consumption. Ultimately such practices prevent consumers from saving and securing future. Consumer becomes aware of the product, generally through advertisements. Thus the advertisements are potential sources affecting the perception of the consumers regarding the products. The people also get highly influenced by the consumption of others. However, brand's image, what it offers to public and what it signifies are the factors that influence the buying behavior of the consumers. To many, it seems that success is only valuable if it can be proven to others. Thus people prove themselves successful through consuming expensive, luxury and often unnecessary things (Bergman, 2010).

The marketing strategies basically are based on extensive research on motivational forces and social influences that affect individuals' buying decision. Marketing professionals use different concepts to make their products appealing and increase their symbolic worth. In advertisements, we can see, romance is used to sell variety of things ranging from cars to fashion accessories like jewelry, perfumes and cosmetics. Advertisements of soft drinks tend to make people feel sense of belongingness with particular group and have self-confidence than to satisfy need of thirst. Reference groups are also potential source of influencing the buying behavior of people. Membership groups like family, relatives, social communities and colleagues are significant sources whereby people get information and force to adapt to group practices and standards. People often get inspired and follow their aspirational group's standards. For example, people tend to wish, purchase, dress up, and act like management level employees, media celebrities, sports figures, and others who inspire them become their ideals (Goodwin et al., 2008).

The business enterprises, while formulating their marketing strategies, should study properly the experiential and symbolic benefits of brands' usage perceived by customers. Symbolic benefits are those characteristics which help consumers show their status. More reputable brands bring more social prestige to consumers. Experiential benefits are intangible features such as how usage of branded products makes consumers feel more enchanted and confident. People come to know the value of brands through the experiences. If people tend to have good experience while using particular brand, they will build a good connection and bonding with this brand. Good experiences like feeling pride, joy, delighted

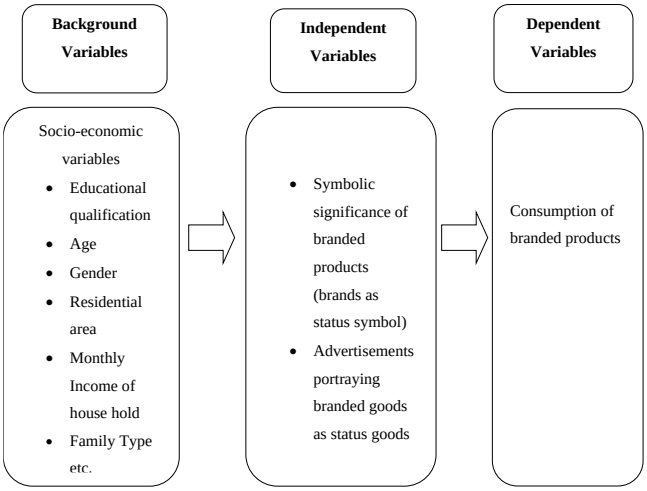
and self-confident impact positively the affective and behavioral attitudes of customers (Lada et al., 2018).

Brands' symbolic features have significant impact on satisfaction of consumers. When symbolic consumer needs are met through consuming particular branded products, customers tend to become more loyal to those brands. The practical and functional benefits of branded products cannot be denied while formulating marketing strategies but brand symbolism has got significance now days to catch consumers' eyes (Anisimova, 2015).

***Significance of study*:** In today's world, branded products have become more than mere products. Branded products are not only being used for simply satisfying the utility based needs. They are being used to satisfy symbolic consumer needs also. Focus is shifting from practical and functional features towards the symbolic features of brands' consumption. Consumption of branded products has started conveying certain meanings in social settings. The vigorous engagement in the consumption of branded goods and services indicates significantly the individual accomplishments, social standing (status), one's identity, belongingness with particular social group, identification with reference group and financial well-being. Consumers also get triggered to consume branded products to reflect on their interests and choices. According to many studies, people have natural desire to catch attention of others and look attractive. They tend to satisfy these desires through usage of expensive brands. This research was aimed at contributing to the debate regarding the brands' consumption as a source of gaining and displaying the high social status and prestige. This study helped determine the existing type of consumer culture in which the people have lessened taking interest in the functional benefits of products and started preferring their immaterial representations. As the clothing is more visible and noticeable way to signal one's social standing, this research did undertake study of consumption of branded clothes and shoes among females. In addition, the study elaborated the role of advertisements in motivating the customers to go for brands' usage. Advertisements are very potential source to present any product as bearer of symbolic value. Current customers' practices and activities are monitored and reflected in advertisements to catch their attention. In such an environment where nonmaterial things like one's social and economic worth is displayed through material things, advertisements are playing key role in benefiting the maximum sale of branded goods. This study contributes not only to sociological debates about consumer culture but also to sustainable economic development discourse. Understanding the symbolic motives behind brand consumption among youth is vital for addressing the growing challenge of consumer debt, reduced savings, and social inequality. The findings can inform programs that encourage responsible consumption and financial literacy, particularly within university settings. Promoting awareness about the economic and psychological effects of status consumption can help young consumers make more balanced and sustainable financial choices.

The main objective of the study was to describe the symbolic significance of brands. On the other hand, the study also identified the role of advertisements in triggering the female consumers to buy branded products.

***Conceptual framework*:** A conceptual framework demonstrates what a researcher anticipates to explore through his study. It states the variables related to his investigation and demonstrates how they may associate with each other. The conceptual framework for this study was as follows:



***Hypotheses*:**

1. There is positive association between brand as a status symbol and brand consumption.
2. There is positive association between fame of brand and brand consumption.
3. There is positive association between advertisements portraying branded goods as status goods and brand consumption.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research was designed to describe the association between symbolic significance of brands and their consumption among female students. The research design was quantitative in nature. The target population for the study was female students of all public universities (seven in number) in Faisalabad district to address the research questions adequately. Sample size for the study was 200 respondents. First, through simple random sampling two universities were selected from seven public universities in Faisalabad district. These two universities were GC Women University Faisalabad and GC University Faisalabad. Secondly, four departments (two from each of two universities) were selected through simple random sampling.

These departments were Department of Sociology and Department of Economics from GCWUF and Department of Business Administration and Department of English from GCUF. Then total 200 female students (50 from each department) were selected through convenient sampling. As the research was quantitative in nature, data collection was done through survey method. Data collection tool was interview schedule. Both descriptive and inferential statistical analysis was done to analyze the data using the software of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics help us present data in meaningful way and interpret what data is showing. Univariate analysis was done in this regard. This analysis involved generating frequency distribution tables along with percentages through SPSS. Inferential statistics help us infer from sampled data about entire target population. Bivariate analysis was done in this regard. Bivariate analysis aims at finding out whether there is a relationship between two different variables or not. If it finds any relationship, it also helps find out the direction and strength of relationship. This analysis involves testing of hypotheses. Chi-square test and gamma test were used for this purpose.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 provides the details regarding demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the study population.

Table 1 depicts that majority (74%) of the respondents belonged to age group of 19-21, 14.5% of respondents belonged to 16-18 age group and only 11.5 % belonged to 22-24 age group. Most of the respondents (33%) were enrolled in BS program, 1st & 2nd semester, 29% of respondents were enrolled in BS 3rd & 4th semester and 18.5% were enrolled in BS 7th & 8th semester. Furthermore 15.5% were enrolled in BS 5th & 6th semester and only 3.5% respondents were enrolled in MSc 3rd & 4th semester. 38.5% respondents' CGPA was 3.6-4.0 and 31% respondents' CGPA was 2.5-3.0. CGPA of 30.5% respondents was 3.1-3.5. Majority (51.5%) of respondents had nuclear families in contrast to the findings of Riasat et al. (2014) who found that the majority (58.3) of the female respondents were in joint family system. Furthermore 39.5% respondents had joint family system and only 9% respondents had extended families. Thus majority of respondents belonged to nuclear families. According to O'Cass and McEwen (2004) it has been seen in many researches that family members in joint family system tend to affect consumption patterns of each other to great extent. People are influenced by the buying choices of their relatives. If expensive brands' consumption is ritual in the family, people get triggered to buy branded goods. 60% respondents had 1-4 siblings and 33.5% respondents had 5-8 siblings. Only 4.5% respondents had 9-12 siblings and 2% respondents had 13-16 siblings. Thus majority of respondents had 1-4 siblings. 26.5% respondents had 20001-40000 Rupees household income monthly (Contrary to the findings of Zafar et al., 2024). 21.5% respondents had less than 20000 Rupees household income. 16.5% respondents had 40001-60000 Rupees income. 13% respondents had 60001-80000 Rupees monthly family income. 15.5% respondents had 80001-100000 Rupees household income monthly and only 7% respondents had more than 100000 Rupees monthly household income. Hiz (2011) in his field survey on conspicuous consumption trends found that people in middle class attach more importance to conspicuous consumption. People who belong to middle class and low income class tend to relate with upper class by consuming luxury goods. Majority (71%) of respondents was residing in urban area. Only 29% respondents were residing in rural area. Shakaryan (2010) found that an increase in urbanization and industrialization has led to increase in commodity production. Industries have started focusing on symbolic significance of their products.

Table 1. Frequency distribution of respondents with reference to demographic and socioeconomic characteristics.

Parameters	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
16-18	29	14.5
19-21	148	74.0
22-24	23	11.5
Education		
BS1-BS2	66	33.0
BS3-BS4	59	29.5
BS5-BS6	31	15.5
BS7-BS8	37	18.5
MSc3-MSc4	7	3.5
CGPA		
2.5-3.0	62	31.0
3.1-3.5	61	30.5
3.6-4.0	77	38.5
Family Type		
Nuclear	103	51.5
Joint	79	39.5
Extended	18	9.0
Number of Siblings		
1-4	120	60.0
5-8	67	33.5
9-12	9	4.5
13-16	4	2.0
Monthly Household Income		
less than 20000	43	21.5
20001-40000	53	26.5
40001-60000	33	16.5
60001-80000	26	13.0
80001-100000	31	15.5
more than 100000	14	7.0
Residential Area		

Rural	58	29.0
Urban	142	71.0

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Respondents according to their level of agreement with the statement that they tend to buy Clothes and Shoes even when they don't need them.

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	40	20.0
Agree	84	42.0
Neither Agree nor Disagree	27	13.5
Disagree	49	24.5
Total	200	100.0

Table 2 shows that less than half (42%) of the respondents agreed that they tend to buy clothes and shoes even when they don't need them and 24.5% respondents disagreed that they buy clothes and shoes unnecessarily. One fifth (20.0%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they buy clothes and shoes unnecessarily. 13.5% respondents were neutral about whether they buy clothes and shoes unnecessarily or not. Bergman (2010) found that consumers have started consuming more than their needs. The people get highly influenced by the consumption of others than one might think. However, brand's image, what it offers to public and what it signifies are the factors that influence the buying behavior of the consumers. To many, it seems that success is only valuable if it can be proven to others. Thus people prove themselves successful through consuming expensive, luxury and often unnecessary things.

Table 3. Frequency Distribution of Respondents with reference to their level of agreement with the statement that they prefer to buy Products from the Famous Brands' Outlets.

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	34	17.0
Agree	114	57.0
Neither Agree nor Disagree	19	9.5
Disagree	33	16.5
Total	200	100.0

Table 3 shows that majority (57%) respondents agreed that they prefer to buy products from the famous brands' outlets which have earned good name in market. 17% respondents strongly agreed. 16.5% respondents disagreed that they prefer to buy products from the famous brands' outlets which have earned good name in market. 9.5% respondents were neutral about it. The fame of the product is associated with brand. Brand is defined as a system of signs and symbols that make the consumer get engaged in an imaginary or symbolic process. Presence of a brand enables one to form the image of the product. This kind of product becomes a worldwide communicator of information about the financial status of the owner, his taste, social prestige and behavior (Shakaryan, 2010).

Table 4. Frequency Distribution of Respondents with reference to their level of agreement regarding that Branded Goods help them show their Social Status.

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	56	28.0
Agree	79	39.5
Neither Agree nor Disagree	35	17.5
Disagree	30	15.0
Total	200	100.0

Table 4 shows that more than one third (39.5%) of respondents agreed that branded goods help them show their social status. 28% respondents strongly agreed and 17.5% respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that branded goods help them show their social status. Only 15% respondents disagreed that branded goods help them show their social status. Veblen (1994) in his work "The Theory of the Leisure Class" coined the term conspicuous consumption. Conspicuous consumption refers to consumption of expensive goods to show financial status rather than to fulfill the utility based needs of the consumer. This behavior is aimed at gaining the admiration by others. Expensive goods are consumed to demonstrate the wealth and status.

Table 5. Frequency Distribution of Respondents with reference to their level of agreement regarding Advertisements often portray Branded Products as Sign of Status.

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	45	22.5
Agree	85	42.5
Neither Agree nor Disagree	26	13.0
Disagree	44	22.0
Total	200	100.0

Table 5 shows that 42.5% (majority) of respondents agreed that advertisements often portray branded products as sign of status. 22.5% strongly agreed that advertisements often portray branded products as sign of status. 22% respondents disagreed that advertisements tend to present branded goods as symbol of status. 13% respondents were neutral about it. Aktan (2003) found that marketing activities tend to make consumers believe that consumption choices are very important source of signaling one's status and social prestige. Table 6 shows that majority (35%) of respondents agreed that the advertisements of branded products influence their choice regarding what to buy and trigger them to buy branded goods. 32.5% respondents strongly agreed that the advertisements of branded products influence their choice regarding what to

buy. Only 16.5% respondents disagreed that advertisements tend to influence their choices to buy different products. 16% respondents were neutral about this. Marketing professionals use different concepts to make their products appealing and increase their symbolic worth. Advertisements of soft drinks tend to make people feel sense of belongingness with particular social group rather than to satisfy thirst (Goodwin et al., 2008).

Table 6. Frequency Distribution of Respondents with reference to their level of agreement about the Advertisements of Branded Products trigger them to buy Branded Goods.

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	65	32.5
Agree	70	35.0
Neither Agree nor Disagree	32	16.0
Disagree	33	16.5
Total	200	100.0

***Hypothesis testing*:** H1: There is positive association between brand as status symbol and brand consumption.

Table 7 indicates the association between brand as status symbol and brand consumption. Chi-square and Gamma tests are applied to find the significance of relationship. Chi-square value which is 55.702 significant at 1% level of significance indicates that there is strong relationship between brand as status symbol and brand consumption. Value of gamma test which is 0.337 significant at 1% alpha value reflects that there is significant relationship between variables under investigation. Positive sign of gamma indicates that there is a positive, a direct relationship between brand as status symbol and brand consumption. Better the symbolic value of brand higher will be consumption of brand. Based upon analysis the hypothesis "there is positive association between brand as status symbol and brand consumption is accepted".

Shakaryan (2010) also supported the association between brand as status symbol and brand consumption. He found that in market sphere customers buying decisions are individually oriented or subjective. They analyze the products by thinking how best they can describe their social status, identity and prestige. Goldsmith et al. (1996) found that status

Table 7. Association between Brand as Status Symbol and Brand Consumption.

			You often tend to see the label of company on products before buying.				
			Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Total
Branded goods help you to show your social status.	Strongly Agree	Count	23	16	11	6	56
		% within Branded goods	41.10%	28.60%	19.60%	10.70%	100.00%
	Agree	Count	31	38	7	3	79
		% within Branded goods	39.20%	48.10%	8.90%	3.80%	100.00%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Count	4	8	14	9	35
		% within Branded goods	11.40%	22.90%	40.00%	25.70%	100.00%
	Disagree	Count	8	4	5	13	30
		% within Branded goods	26.70%	13.30%	16.70%	43.30%	100.00%
Total		Count	66	66	37	31	200
		% within Branded goods	33.00%	33.00%	18.50%	15.50%	100.00%

Chi-Square Test

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	55.702[a]	9	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	54.343	9	0.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	20.159	1	0.000
N of Valid Cases	200		

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymptotic Standard Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	0.337	0.085	3.816	0.000
N of Valid Cases		200			

Table 8. Association between Brand's Fame and Brand Consumption.

			You tend to buy branded clothes and shoes even when you don't need them.				
			Strongly Agree	**Agree**	**Neither Agree nor Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Total**
Brands' image and fame prompts you to buy their products.	Strongly Agree	Count	15	31	1	5	52
		% within Brands' image and fame	28.80%	59.60%	1.90%	9.60%	100.00%
	Agree	Count	13	38	10	14	75
		% within Brands' image and fame	17.30%	50.70%	13.30%	18.70%	100.00%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Count	4	5	12	14	35
		% within Brands' image and fame	11.40%	14.30%	34.30%	40.00%	100.00%
	Disagree	Count	8	10	4	16	38
		% within Brands' image and fame	21.10%	26.30%	10.50%	42.10%	100.00%
Total		Count	40	84	27	49	200
		% within Brands' image and fame	20.00%	42.00%	13.50%	24.50%	100.00%

Chi-Square Test

	Value	**Df**	**Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)**
Pearson Chi-Square	48.015[a]	9	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	49.768	9	0.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	19.912	1	0.000
N of Valid Cases	200		

Symmetric Measures

		Value	**Asymptotic Standard Error[a]**	**Approximate T[b]**	**Approximate Significance**
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	0.383	0.079	4.718	0.000
N of Valid Cases		200			

consumption is an important factor influencing the fashion behavior of consumers. Veblen (1994) found that consumers tend to use luxury products in order to show their social status.

H2: There is positive association between fame of brand and brand consumption.

Table 8 indicates the association between fame of brand and brand consumption. Chi-square and Gamma tests are applied to find the significance of relationship. Chi-square value which is 48.015 significant at 1% level of significance indicates that there is strong relationship between fame of brand and brand consumption. Value of gamma test which is 0.383 significant at 1% alpha value reflects that there is significant relationship between variables under investigation. Positive sign of gamma indicates that there is a positive, a direct relationship between fame of brand and brand consumption. Higher the fame of brand higher will be consumption of brand. Based upon analysis the hypothesis "there is positive association between fame of brand and brand consumption is accepted".

Bergman (2010) also supported the association between brand's fame and brand consumption. He found that a good is considered conspicuous when its features and quantity being consumed, are quite unique to be publically noticed.

H3: There is positive association between advertisements portraying branded goods as status goods and brand consumption.

Table 9 indicates that the association between advertisements portraying branded goods as status goods and brand consumption. Chi-square and Gamma tests are applied to find the significance of relationship. Chi-square value which is 80.812 significant at 1% level of significance indicates that there is strong relationship between advertisements portraying branded goods as status goods and brand consumption. Value of gamma test which is 0.442 significant at 1% alpha value reflects that there is significant relationship between variables under investigation. Positive sign of gamma indicates that there is a positive, a direct relationship between advertisements portraying branded goods as status goods and brand consumption. More advertisements portray the branded goods as status goods higher would be consumption of brands. Based upon analysis the hypothesis "there is positive association between advertisements

Table 9. Association between Advertisements portraying Branded goods as Status goods and Brand Consumption.

			The advertisements of branded products trigger you to buy branded products.				
			Strongly Agree	**Agree**	**Neither Agree nor Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Total**
Advertisements often portray branded products as sign of status.	Strongly Agree	Count	21	15	5	4	45
		% within Advertisements	46.70%	33.30%	11.10%	8.90%	100.00%
	Agree	Count	29	47	6	3	85
		% within Advertisements	34.10%	55.30%	7.10%	3.50%	100.00%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Count	4	4	12	6	26
		% within Advertisements	15.40%	15.40%	46.20%	23.10%	100.00%
	Disagree	Count	11	4	9	20	44
		% within Advertisements	25.00%	9.10%	20.50%	45.50%	100.00%
Total		Count	65	70	32	33	200
		% within Advertisements	32.50%	35.00%	16.00%	16.50%	100.00%

Chi-Square Test

	Value	**Df**	**Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)**
Pearson Chi-Square	80.812[a]	9	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	77.160	9	0.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	34.210	1	0.000
N of Valid Cases	200		

Symmetric Measures

		Value	**Asymptotic Standard Error[a]**	**Approximate T[b]**	**Approximate Significance**
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	0.442	0.081	5.099	0.000
N of Valid Cases		200			

portraying branded goods as status goods and brand consumption is accepted". Aktan (2003) also supported the association between advertisements portraying branded goods as status goods and brand consumption. He argued that marketing activities tend to make consumers believe that consumption choices are very important source of signaling one's status and social prestige. The relationship between quality and purchase decision especially among females has also found strong existence (Anwar et al., 2017).

***Conclusion*:** This study concludes that symbolic and status-oriented brand consumption among female students in Faisalabad plays a significant role in shaping identity and social prestige. However, the findings also reveal important economic and sustainability concerns. Excessive focus on branded status goods can encourage overconsumption, hinder saving behavior, and reduce financial preparedness for future uncertainties. From a sustainable development perspective, these behavioral trends highlight the need for consumer education emphasizing financial responsibility, self-awareness, and value-based purchasing. Educational institutions and policymakers should promote sustainable consumption campaigns and youth financial literacy programs to balance aspirations for social prestige with long-term economic security. By aligning consumer choices with sustainability values, individuals can contribute positively to both personal well-being and community development.

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